

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 EB-08 AID-05 /079 W

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FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2507

INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABIDJAN 2657

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, RO, IV

SUBJ: HOUPHOUET'S COMMENTS ON CEAUSESCU VISIT

REF: ABIDJAN 2156

1. IN CONVERSATION LAST NIGHT WITH PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY, PRIMARILY DEVOTED TO OTHER SUBJECTS, HE MADE ONE OR TWO COMMENTS ON RECENTLY CONCLUDED CEAUSESCU VISIT TO THE IVORY COAST WHICH ARE OF PASSING INTEREST. HIS REMARKS WERE MADE IN THE CONTEXT OF HIS GENERAL SATISFACTION WITH CONTINUED ECONOMIC GROWTH IN THE IVORY COAST COUPLED WITH HIS CONCERN THAT THE STABILITY AND RELATIVE PROSPERITY THAT EXISTS HERE MAKES THE IVORY COAST A TARGET FOR "JEALOUS CRITICISM" FROM ITS NEIGHBORS.

2. HOUPHOUET SAID THAT HE WAS SATISFIED THAT THE CEAUSESCU VISIT HAD FULFILLED HIS RELATIVELY MODEST
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EXPECTATIONS FOR IT. THE VISIT ITSELF AND THE TIME HOUPHOUET HAD DEVOTED TO CEAUSESCU SHOWED, HE THOUGHT, THE THE IVORY COAST WAS PREPARED TO EXCHANGE IDEAS EVEN WITH THE LEADERS OF STATES WHICH HAVE PROFOUNDLY DIFFERENT SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL VALUES. CEAUSESCU'S TRIP TO YAMOUSSOUKRO, THE PRESIDENT'S HOMETOWN WHICH HAS BEEN TURNED INTO A SHOWCASE FOR IVORIAN DEVELOPMENT, WAS

PARTICULARLY INTERESTING AND USEFUL FROM HOUPHOUET'S STANDPOINT. AN ENTHUSIASTIC AGRICULTURALIST, HOUPHOUET HAD WALKED CEAUSESCU OVER HIS PLANTATION AND HAD POINTED OUT TO HIM THE WORK BEING DONE IN EXPERIMENTAL NURSERIES THERE. WHEN I ASKED HOUPHOUET WHETHER CEAUSESCU KNEW MUCH ABOUT AGRICULTURE, HE SAID, "HE KNOWS MORE NOW THAN HE DID BEFORE." THIS LED HOUPHOUET TO OBSERVE THAT IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE REST OF THE WORLD TO TAKE COMMUNIST ECONOMIES SERIOUSLY UNTIL THEY LEARNED TO FEED THEMSELVES. HE THOUGHT, IN ANY CASE, THAT CEAUSESCU HAD BEEN GENUINELY IMPRESSED WITH THE WAY IN WHICH THE IVORY COAST WAS MAKING THE MOST OF ITS POSSIBILITIES.

3. HOUPHOUET SAID THAT IN THE COURSE OF THE GENERAL CONVERSATION WITH CEAUSESCU ABOUT EAST-WEST RELATIONS HE HAD CHIDED THE ROMANIAN PRESIDENT FOR INVOKING THE HOBGOBLIN OF WESTERN IMPERIALISM. CEAUSESCU HAD REPLIED THAT THE ROMANIANS OPPOSED ANY KIND OF IMPERIALISM TO WHICH HOUPHOUET SAID HE HAD REPLIED, "THERE IS ONLY ONE KIND AND IT COMES FROM YOUR NORTHERN NEIGHBOR." DESPITE CEAUSESCU'S WILLINGNESS TO BANTER ON THIS LEVEL, HOUPHOUET SAID THAT HE HAD FOUND HIM TO BE FAIRLY CONVENTIONAL IN HIS DISCUSSION OF ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT ISSUES. HOUPHOUET HAD LITTLE DOUBT HOWEVER THAT CEAUSESCU KNEW THAT WHATEVER ROMANIAN MARGIN FOR MANEUVER EXISTED IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS DEPENDED FAR MORE ON WESTERN STRENGTH THAN ON SOVIET SELF-RESTRAINT.

4. COMMENT: IN A SEPARATE CONVERSATION LAST WEEK WITH
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ROMANIAN AMBASSADOR DUMITRU, I ASKED HIM WHAT HE FORESAW TO BE THE SCOPE OF THE MIXED ROMANIAN-IVORIAN COMMISSION WHOSE FORMATION WAS ANNOUNCED IN THE FINAL COMMUNIQUE. DUMITRU SAID THAT IT WAS EXPECTED THAT THE COUNCIL OR COMMISSION WOULD BE AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL AND WOULD MEET ONCE A YEAR, ALTERNATELY IN BUCHAREST AND ABIDJAN. NO DATE HAD BEEN SET FOR THE FIRST MEETING AND HE DID NOT EXPECT THAT IT WOULD TAKE PLACE BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR. DUMITRU SAID THAT IN PRINCIPLE ANY SUBJECT OF INTEREST TO EITHER COUNTRY COULD BE RAISED IN THE COMMISSION BUT THAT IN PRACTICE ITS WORK WOULD BE DEVOTED PRIMARILY TO COMMERCIAL AND TECHNICAL MATTERS. END COMMENT.
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Message Attributes

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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Errors: N/A
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